



Washington State Senate

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WCCSEO
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To the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials:

I write to request that the Commission reconsider its proposed 18% pay increase for state legislators.

As past Chair and current Ranking Member for the Senate Ways and Means Committee, it is my responsibility to help craft a balanced budget that prioritizes our state's spending. From education to mental health to valuable services for seniors and the developmentally disabled, there are simply many greater and higher uses for taxpayer dollars than the proposed substantial raise for elected officials.

While we need to make sure that pay for elected officials is enough to attract people from all walks of life, I question whether this level of increase is merited by the facts, as there does not appear to be a shortage of people willing to run for these positions. Based on the Commission's own data, Washington legislator salaries *at their current level* rank in the upper echelon of all states including the 12 states the Commission has deemed as comparable.*

I am grateful for the work that you do, but the proposed 18% increase is far out of line with what our constituents in the private sector receive. I ask, to the extent you decide a raise is merited, that it be much more closely aligned with the increases private sector workers across the state have received over the past few years. Such an approach will enable more funds to go to the truly highest priority uses in the budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Braun", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Senator John Braun
20th Legislative District

*See: <https://salaries.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/12%20Comparable%20States%20and%20legislative%20comparisons%20in%2012%20states.pdf>